

## Sesuit Harbor Subwatershed Dennis, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

The Sesuit Harbor Subwatershed is located in East Dennis. It has an area of 1,752 acres. Sesuit Harbor opens into Cape Cod Bay. The subwatershed is dominated by residential development south of Route 6A.

A tidal restriction at Bridge Creek is deepening the wetlands. The tidal wetlands at Cold Storage Road are dominated by *Phragmites*.

According to Division of Marine Fisheries Sanitary Surveys, the water quality of Sesuit Harbor is impacted by birds, pets, increased development, and increased runoff. While water quality samples taken in the month of November for shellfish area classifications used to be clean, samples taken during this month now have high *E. coli* bacteria counts. More than 10% of samples exceed the 28 parts per million regulation for shellfishing. The declining water quality is resulting in shorter open periods for shellfishing.

Municipal water is available in almost all parts of this watershed. There are no municipal sewers in the Town of Dennis.

### Stewards:

- Dennis Water Quality Advisory Board

### Studies conducted in the watershed:

- Cape Cod Wetlands Investigation. June 1996. US Army Corps of Engineers, New England Division.
- Cape Cod Atlas of Tidally Restricted Salt Marshes. 2001. Cape Cod Commission.

### Who is collecting water quality data and where:

- The town has recently purchased a dissolved oxygen meter and is planning to monitor 15 ponds through the Water Quality Advisory Board.

### Management actions taken:

- Cold Storage Road Salt Marsh Restoration Project, under the GROWetlands Initiative of the Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration Program (2001). Replacement of a culvert to restore tidal flow to 12 acres of salt marsh.
- Investigation of Bridge Street Salt Marsh Restoration Project.
- Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife stocks Scargo Pond with rainbow, brook, and brown trout.

**Subwatershed facts:** (For data sources see Appendix)

- 21 E sites: 2. Locations are the Shell Service Station on Route 6A/Bridge St., and the property at 1782 Main Street.
- Solid waste sites: none
- Zone IIs located in this watershed: 2
- Interim Wellhead Protection Areas (IWPAs): none
- Percent of the undeveloped land that is protected (according to 1985/1990 data): 38.9%
- Acres of existing wetlands: 143
- Certified vernal pools: none
- Named freshwater lakes & ponds: Scargo Lake, Funn, Cedar (*Dennis*)
- Named rivers or creeks: none
- 1998 Massachusetts 303(d) List of Impaired Waterbodies: Sesuit Creek, from Route 6A to the mouth at Cape Cod Bay – pathogens.
- Shellfish growing areas: Sesuit Harbor is conditionally approved for shellfish harvesting.
- This watershed contains Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife.

**Priorities:**

- Initiate water quality monitoring program in Sesuit Harbor for nutrients and bacteria to participate in the Estuaries Project, Southeastern Massachusetts Embayment Restoration. Work with Estuaries Project to develop a QAPP.
- Implement BMP for drain at intersection of Route 6A and Sesuit Neck Road. Work with Massachusetts Highway Department to correct. (NRCS)
- Conduct further study of the 61 acres of tidally restricted wetlands at Bridge Street. Implement restoration project to enhance salt marsh and fisheries. The Bridge Street restriction of Sesuit Creek is Site DE-1 in the 2001 *Cape Cod Atlas of Tidally Restricted Salt Marshes*.
- Investigate and remediate runoff coming from parking lots at Sesuit Harbor.
- Acquire open space. Parcels considered a priority for acquisition for water supply protection and development: Dennis Tracts 14, 15, 17, 18, and 20 were ranked as having medium or high water supply development potential in the Cape Cod Commission's *Priority Land Acquisition Assessment Project* (April 1999). These tracts are located throughout the Town of Dennis.

**Recreation:**

Camping areas: none

Golf courses:

- Dennis Highlands
- Dennis Pines

Pathways and trails:

- Whitfield Johnson Nature Trail
- [www.capecodcommission.org/pathways/trailguide.htm](http://www.capecodcommission.org/pathways/trailguide.htm)

Public access:

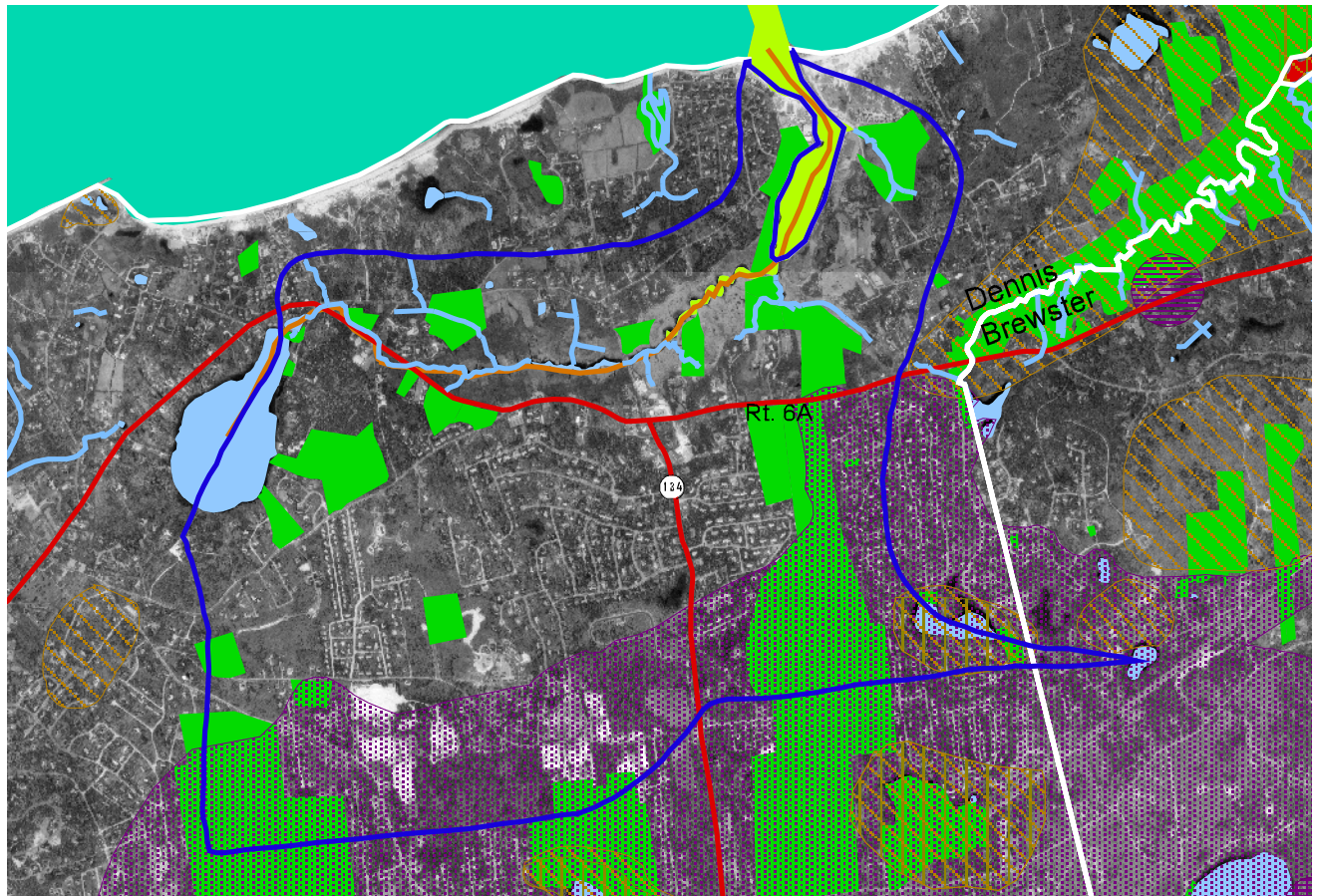
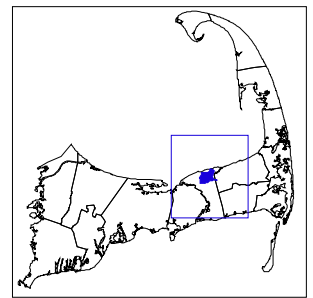
- [www.state.ma.us/dfwele/pab/pabSEmap.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/dfwele/pab/pabSEmap.htm)

Public beaches and landings:

- Harbor View Beach, Cold Storage Beach, Scargo Lake Beach
- 2 landings on Sesuit Harbor
- Northside Marina

# Sesuit Harbor

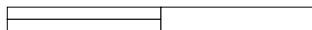
Dennis, MA



## Watershed Resources



0 0.4 0.8 Miles



### Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Data

- Certified Vernal Pool
- Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- Estimated Habitats of Rare Species

### Groundwater Protection Areas

- Interim Wellhead Protection Area
- Zone II
- Solid Waste Facility

Watershed Boundary

Anadromous Fish Run

### Shellfish Growing Areas

- APPROVED
- CONDITIONALLY APPROVED
- MANAGEMENT CLOSURE
- PROHIBITED
- RESTRICTED
- Open Space

Streams

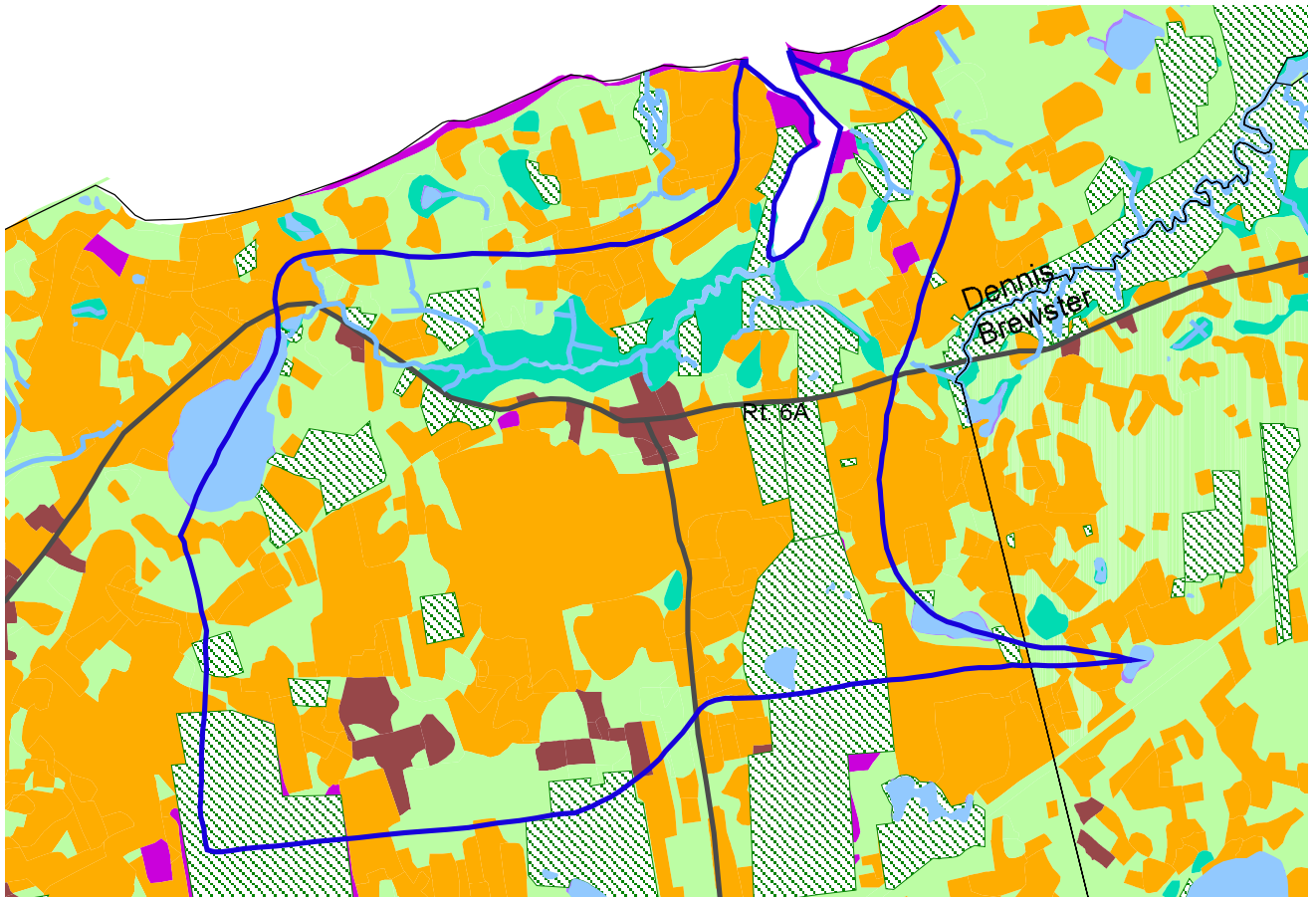
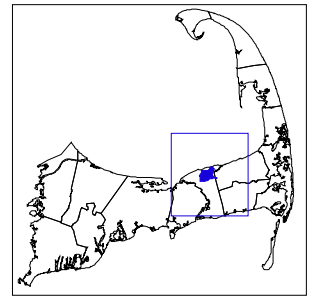
Ponds

Roads



# Sesuit Harbor

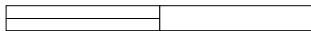
Dennis, MA



## Land Use



0 0.4 0.8 Miles



## Land Use

- non-residential developed
- open land
- recreation
- residential
- water
- wetland

- Streams
- Ponds
- Watershed Boundary
- Protected Open Space

